

## Orphan by Droory

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**Summary:**

After the storm Isaac is feeling lost, helpless, and confused when he hears cries during the night.

# Orphan

## Author's Note:

This was inspired by @fushimington's art on twitter! Go check them out!

Isaac heard the cries late one night. It was raining again—at least he thought it was, it was hard to tell when every night for the last week had been plagued by the memories of the Boulder falling. Admittedly, he didn't remember much of the aftermath. He had woken up in the sanctum some time afterwards and had been crushed a second time to learn everything hadn't been some horrible nightmare.

His dad was gone—crushed by the Boulder in front of his eyes—along with Jenna's whole family. He and Gareth had tried to go to her once they had recovered, but she had withdrawn and locked herself in her grandparent's house. She had tried to follow the river as far as she could the night of the storm, crying and yelling for her family, saying she just had to find them, the people of Vale said.

Isaac felt lost and hopeless, unable to help his best friend in the whole world, or to do anything to console his mother, or manage his own grief in any tangible way. Too much had happened and he didn't know what he should do, what he could do, or even what he wanted to do.

So when he heard the cries that night, he thought maybe it was Jenna and he could finally do something. Throwing on his cloak just as he had the night of the storm and his dad's scarf he headed out into the rain to find the source of the cries.

The rain beat and pattered against his hood and he tugged his cloak tighter around him as he tried to find the source of the noise—a noise that was sounding just a little bit stranger now that he was outside. It was closer than he had initially thought, and any ideas of it being Jenna were dashed when it seemed to be coming from the cliff face itself.

Isaac was wary to say the least, kicking himself for not bringing his knife out with him. Since the storm most of the monsters had been driven out of town, but now and then there were reports of a critter here or there. Having had to fight them and then to have been knocked out cold by... something... Isaac started to second guess his idea to find the source of the cries.

Yet he pressed on, searching along the rocks for anything discernible in the moonlight glistening off the rain. His curiosity was rewarded when he discovered a small hole dug into the side of the cliff that the cries echoed out from. Isaac's heart raced again, wishing once more he had brought his knife, before he took a deep breath to calm his nerves and crouch down to peer into the hole.

Inside the little burrow was a small Sandshrew shivering and shaking in the cold night air. It cried out weakly, a cry filled with sorrow, again, not noticing Isaac peering in at it.

*"Sh-shreeww..."*

*"Hey there, little guy,"* Isaac said as gently as he could over the noise of the rain, waving his hand a little to appear as non-threatening as possible to the little Sandshrew.

It scurried backwards immediately, eyes wide and fixed on Isaac, but had nowhere deeper to run to.

*"I'm not gonna hurt you,"* Isaac said, taking a step back from the burrow to try and not scare the life out of it.

Despite the opening now presented to it, the Sandshrew made no attempt to escape. Its wide eyes just followed every single movement Isaac made. Isaac pouted, considering his options, and then tried to gently reach into the burrow to try and coax it out.

As quickly as it had scurried away the Sandshrew swiped at Isaac's hand, claws scraping against his skin before Isaac could withdraw it. Wincing and hissing in pain, granting that that had been a stupid and ill-advised idea on his part, Isaac did his best to work what little Psynergy he had against the scrape.

After a moment's more deliberation, reasoning this Pokémon had lost its mother and was alone, scared, and likely hungry, Isaac came up with a considerably better plan. Taking a slow few steps away from the burrow so as to not startle the Sandshrew, Isaac then broke into a run to Kay's garden. She probably wouldn't appreciate a midnight thief pilfering some of her herbs and berries, but he could ask for forgiveness later.

As quick as he had left Isaac was back, laying out the food just in front of the burrow and taking a seat beside it. He didn't say anything or try to coax it again, he just sat and watched the burrow as rain beat down onto his back.

Another minute, maybe two or three—he hadn't been counting, passed before the Sandshrew's head poked curiously out of the cliff. It eyed him for a moment, and then the food, then him again before ducking back inside. It was another few minutes before it did the same, only this time it took a cautious few steps out of its little home.

Isaac held his breath, afraid that even a single movement would scare the Sandshrew away. Step by step it inched closer to the berries Isaac had brought, before gathering one up in its claws to eat, and then another, and another, before it had devoured the lot.

Isaac exhaled slowly as the Sandshrew stepped closer to him now, sniffing at his knees and his arms as it inched closer before climbing onto his lap. Isaac resisted the urge to grunt at the surprising weight of the Sandshrew on his legs as it stood up to inspect his face before it let out another little cry—considerably stronger than the ones he had heard earlier—and licked at Isaac's face.

Stunned, still not daring to move, Isaac just watched as the Sandshrew shifted to and from slightly on his legs, before curling up into a ball in his lap. Feeling as though that meant it was okay, Isaac slowly lifted his hand to rub along the Sandshrew's back. It didn't cry out, didn't run, and didn't try to scratch at him. Isaac smiled, content to sit there with the lost orphan Pokémon for a few minutes more.

Only when his cloak started to soak through and his legs cramped from the position and the weighty Pokémon in his lap, did Isaac gently scoop the Sandshrew into his arms and carry him back to his home.

### **Author's Note:**

Hope you enjoyed it! Just whipped this up quickly after work so apologies for any errors :P